

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FUNDING FOR FULL-TIME KINDERGARTEN (FTK)

Applying for additional funds for FTK in the General Fund:

Q: When is the application for additional funding for full-time kindergarten due?

A: The PAA-3, Application for Additional ANB is due by June 1 for the ensuing year. However, if the form is received by the OPI before February 1, funding information for FTK will be included on the preliminary budget data sheet issued on March 1. If the form is submitted between February 1 and June 1, a revised Preliminary Budget Data Sheet will be reissued by June 30.

Q: What signatures are required on the PAA-3 form?

A: The chairman of the board of trustees and the county superintendent must sign the PAA-3 form.

Q: How is the additional ANB for FTK actually calculated?

A: Based on the number of kindergarten students reported in the October and February enrollment counts, the ANB will be recalculated for each elementary budget unit to generate a revised current year ANB. For purposes of determining which ANB will generate the highest maximum budget, the difference between the revised current year ANB and the original (without FTK) current year ANB will be added to the original 3-year average ANB to generate a revised 3-year average ANB.

The district's maximum general fund budget and BASE budget will be recalculated using the current year ANB for all budget units or the 3-year average ANB for all budget units, whichever generates the greatest maximum general fund budget.

Q: Our district plans to offer a kindergarten program that meets all day, every other day. For example, we will have class on Mon/Wed/Fri of one week and Tues/Thurs the next week. Can we now get funding for FTK under this program?

A: The minimum aggregate hours required for a full-time kindergarten program is 720 hours of pupil instruction. If the program you've described will be conducted for at least 720 aggregate hours in the school year, then it would qualify for FTK funding. The minimum aggregate hours required for a half-time kindergarten program is 360 hours of pupil instruction.

Q: What does E1, E2, E3, etc. mean? Do I need to fill in a percentage in each of these to get my FTK funding?

A: Each elementary district has at least one elementary ("E") budget unit. Some districts have more than one budget unit so they are broken down by E1, E2, etc. For each budget unit of a district, a percentage must be entered if FTK will be offered in the ensuing year. (If you don't know how many budget units your district has, refer to your Budget Data Sheet or last year's budget form.)

Q: When a district offers only a full-time kindergarten program, how is the percentage determined?

A: For implementation of the FTK program, the percentage is determined based on the program offered. Therefore, if the district only offers a full-time program, the percentage is 100, even though some students enroll part-time. In subsequent years, ANB funding will be based on actual enrollment counts.

Q: My district plans to offer FTK in 3 of our 5 elementary schools. What percentage should I use on the PAA-3 form?

A: The percentage should be calculated by dividing the number of kindergarten students anticipated to be offered FTK divided by the total number of kindergarten students anticipated to enroll in a kindergarten program.

Q: My district plans to phase in FTK. We anticipate offering 20% in FY2008, another 50% in FY2009 and the final 30% in FY2010. Do we have to file the form PAA-3 every year in order to get additional FTK funding?

A: Yes. However, once a district is offering 100% FTK, the form does not need to be submitted again.

Q: My district has been offering FTK for the past 3 years. We also offer a half-time program, which meets in the morning. Last year, there were 5 students enrolled in the half-time program and 35 students enrolled in the full-time program. At this time, we do not have exact enrollment numbers for the ensuing year. What percentage should we use on the form?

A: If the kindergarten program offered in the ensuing year is similar to the program offered in the previous year, divide 35 students enrolled in the full-time program by 40 total kindergarten students enrolled in both programs, which would be 88%.

Q: Do I have to answer 6B on the PAA-3 form if we didn't have FTK this year?

A: Yes.

Q: My district won't implement FTK in the ensuing year. Do I need to fill out the PAA-3 form now? Also, is there any way we can receive the one-time-only start up costs so we can remodel our building to accommodate FTK?

A: If your district will not offer a full-time kindergarten program in the ensuing year, it is not necessary to submit a PAA-3 form now. However, a district may apply for the one-time-only start-up costs for use in implementing FTK prior to July 1, 2012. A form is available for the district to indicate its intent to offer FTK prior to July 1, 2012. Upon receipt of the completed form, OPI will release the kindergarten start-up monies to the district.

One-Time-Only (OTO) Payment for Start-up Costs for Full-Time Kindergarten

Q: How do I apply for the one-time-only start-up costs for implementing FTK? How much can I expect to receive and when will OPI distribute the money?

A: When OPI receives a signed copy of form PAA-3, Section 6 from the school district, the OTO payment for kindergarten start-up costs will be calculated. It is estimated that this payment will be approximately \$971 per kindergarten student reported to OPI in October 2006 (fall enrollment count).

Districts that will not offer FTK in the ensuing year, but intend to offer FTK prior to July 2012 should complete the form "Intent to Offer a Full-time Kindergarten Program" available at the following link:
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/pdf/SchoolFinance/forms/07IntendFTK.pdf>

Q: What fund will be used to account for the OTO kindergarten start-up money?

A: The OTO kindergarten start-up payment will be deposited to the elementary district's Miscellaneous Programs Fund (15).

Q: My district has been offering FTK for the past 3 years. Are we entitled to receive the one-time-only start-up costs? What can we spend the start-up costs on if we already have FTK?

A: The law doesn't specify the allowable or unallowable costs associated with the development of a full-time kindergarten program. Any costs related to or resulting from implementation of full-time kindergarten would be allowable, including addition or remodeling of classrooms, equipping a classroom, supplies and materials purchases, teacher training or even costs associated with moving other grades to a different building to make room for FTK.

